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DOCTOR WHO #6

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TARQ HAD BEEN RIDING THE DOLPHIDDA, PRACTISING FOR A GAME OF WAVERIDER WHEN HE'D BEEN PLUCKED OFF HIS PLANET AND BROUGHT HERE.
BROUGHT HERE WITH EVERY OTHER MEMBER OF HIS SPECIES, PRETTY MUCH. WHEREVER HERE WAS.
THE STRANGE MAN TOLD THEM THEY HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY BECAUSE SOMEONE HAD BUILT A WEAPON THAT WOULD USE ALL THE PSYCHIC ENERGY CREATED BY THEIR COLLECTIVE TRAUMAS.
TARQ WASN'T SURE HE UNDERSTOOD THAT. OR CARED. ALL THAT CONCERNED HIM WAS SURVIVING LONG ENOUGH TO GET HOME AND WAVERIDE.
APPARENTLY, THE STRANGE MAN HAD SAID, SOME CREATURE, SOMETHING ANCIENT AND EVIL, WAS BREAKING INTO THE UNIVERSE. TARQ'S WORLD WAS PERFECTLY ALIGNED, ALONG WITH TEN OTHER WORLDS, TO FORM A "PSYCHIC CHANNEL" THAT COULD CLOSE DOWN THIS TEAR IN THE FABRIC OF SPACE AND TIME.
APPARENTLY.
TARQ REMEMBERED THAT THE STRANGE MAN WAS ALLIED WITH A GROUP HE'D REFERRED TO AS THE PANTHEON. THEY HAD FOUND A SONIC WEAPON THAT WOULD DESTROY THE INVADER.
SO THAT WAS OKAY THEN.
EXCEPT THAT THE PANTHEON HAD BEEN BETRAYED, THE GUN STOLEN, AND THE THIEF WAS LEADING AN ARMY OF ROBOTS AGAINST THE INHABITANTS OF THE TEN PLANETS, NONE OF WHOM WERE ENORMOUSLY AGGRESSIVE. EXCEPT THE TAUREANS...

SADLY, TARQ WON'T GET HOME TO THAT WAVERIDING COMPETITION. THE UNIVERSE IS NEVER THAT KIND OR CONVENIENT. HE ISN'T THE FIRST OF HIS PEOPLE TO DIE TODAY AND HE CERTAINLY WON'T BE THE LAST.
FIGHT! DESTROY THE ROBOTS! WE MUST HELP THE DOCTOR!
HE IS GOING TO GET US ALL HOME! HE HAS PROMISED...
YEAARGHHHHH!
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO...
...AGAIN...
LADY MARTHA, YOU WERE HIS FRIEND FOR THE LAST FEW HOURS OF HIS LIFE. THAT IS ENOUGH.
I CANNOT COPE WITH THIS... THE NOISE, THE SCREAMS, THE GUN BLASTS...

DOCTOR! WE SURVIVE THIS, THEY'LL BE SINGING SONGS ABOUT US FOR ETERNITY!
BUBASTION, WE SURVIVE THIS, AND AT LEAST THERE'LL BE AN ETERNITY...
BUT I'LL LIVE WITH THE SONGS, IF IT MEANS WE CAN STOP THARLOT AND SAVE THE UNIVERSE.
NOT MUCH TO ASK, IS IT?

"STILL, I ALWAYS LIKE TO BELIEVE TEN IMPOSSIBLE THINGS BEFORE BREAKFAST. JUST HOPE WINNING IS THE ELEVENTH...

"WONDER WHAT THE SONG LYRICS'LL BE. MORE LENNON/MCCARTNEY THAN GILBERT & SULLIVAN I HOPE.

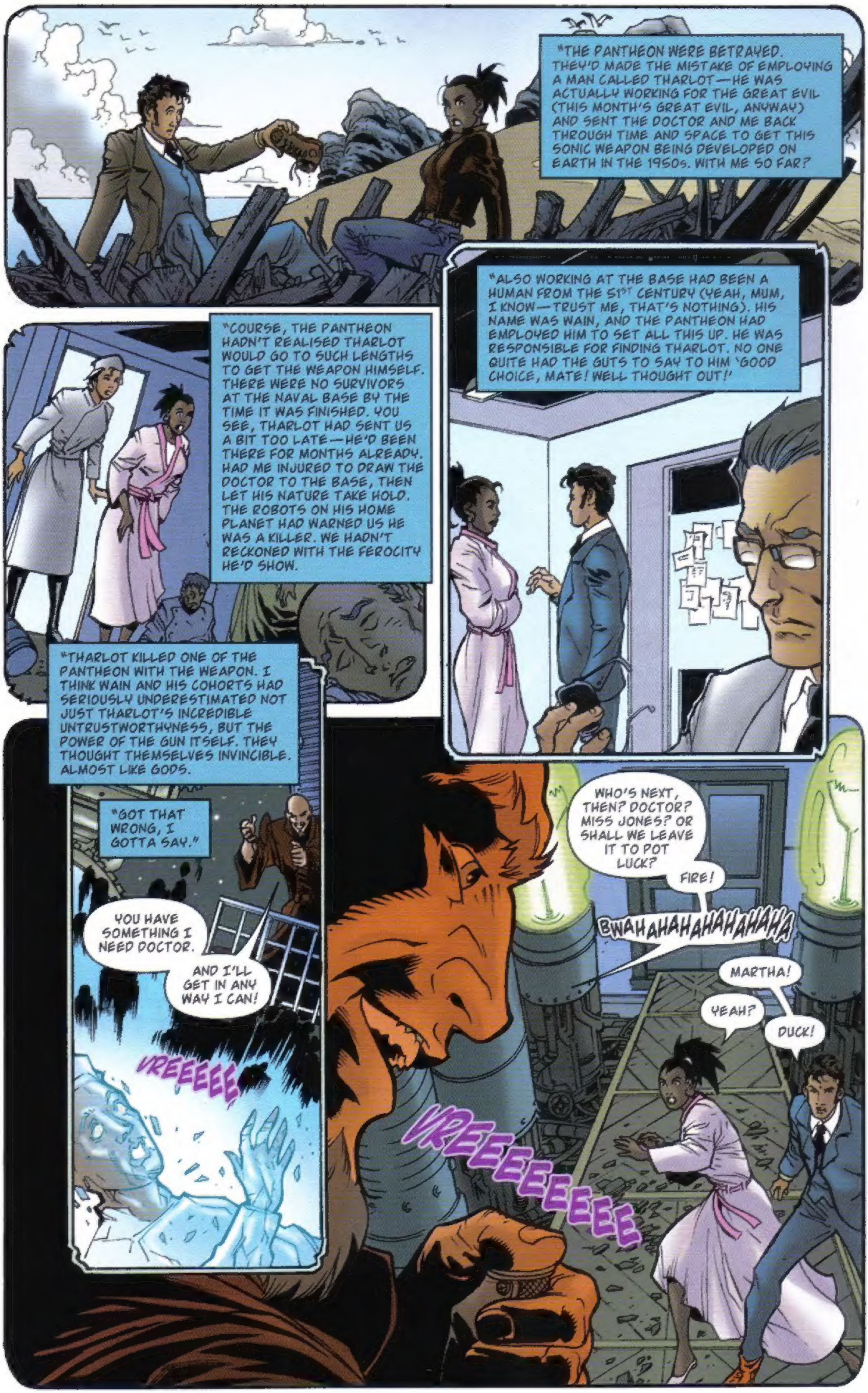
"ALTHOUGH KNOWING MY LUCK RECENTLY, IT'LL BE STOCK, AITKEN AND WATERMAN...

"FUNNY WHAT GOES THROUGH YOUR MIND AT TIMES LIKE THIS. NEVER ASKED MARTHA WHAT HER FAVOURITE MUSIC IS... ARETHA FRANKLIN? JOSS STONE? AIMEE DUFFY? WHEN THIS IS OVER...I MUST ASK. AND HER FAVOURITE COLOUR. AND BOOK. AND JAMES BOND MOVIE. AND TELETUBBIE. BETTER NOT BE PO, THOUGH—STRAIGHT BACK HOME FOR HER IF IT IS."

"HEY MUM. I'M STUCK HERE ON AN ALIEN PLANET COUNTLESS STAR SYSTEMS FROM EARTH, ABOUT TO DIE IN A BATTLE I CANNOT BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND, SO HEAVEN KNOWS WHAT YOU'D MAKE OF IT. BUT I'LL TELL YOU THIS FOR NOTHING, I WOULDN'T CHANGE IT FOR ANYTHING. WELL, MAYBE THE DYING BIT, BUT BEING HERE? SEEING THE UNIVERSE, GOOD AND BAD? WITH THE DOCTOR AND HIS TARDIS? WOULDN'T SWAP A MOMENT OF IT.

"I ONLY WISH THERE WAS SOME WAY I COULD LET YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU, DAD, EVERYONE. AND HOW PROUD I AM TO BE HERE, USING MY MEDICAL SKILLS, EVERYTHING I LEARNED. IT'S ALL BEEN WORTH IT—AND IF I DIE TODAY, YOU'LL NEVER KNOW. DON'T HATE HIM, MUM. THE DOCTOR'S BRILLIANT. BECAUSE HE SAID 'YES' TO ME EARLIER. AND THAT MEANT THE WORLD TO ME.

"AND YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE IS BIZARRE? ALL I CAN THINK OF IS TINKY WINKY IN A FIELD OF RABBITS, WAVING HIS HANDBAG AROUND. FUNNY THE THINGS YOU THINK OF IN TIMES OF STRESS...


"THE PANTHEON WERE BETRAYED. THEY'D MADE THE MISTAKE OF EMPLOYING A MAN CALLED THARLOT—HE WAS ACTUALLY WORKING FOR THE GREAT EVIL (THIS MONTH'S GREAT EVIL, ANYWAY) AND SENT THE DOCTOR AND ME BACK THROUGH TIME AND SPACE TO GET THIS SONIC WEAPON BEING DEVELOPED ON EARTH IN THE 1950s. WITH ME SO FAR?
"ALSO WORKING AT THE BASE HAD BEEN A HUMAN FROM THE 51ST CENTURY (YEAH, MUM, I KNOW—TRUST ME, THAT'S NOTHING). HIS NAME WAS WAIN, AND THE PANTHEON HAD EMPLOYED HIM TO SET ALL THIS UP. HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING THARLOT. NO ONE QUITE HAD THE GUTS TO SAY TO HIM 'GOOD CHOICE, MATE! WELL THOUGHT OUT!'
"COURSE, THE PANTHEON HADN'T REALISED THARLOT WOULD GO TO SUCH LENGTHS TO GET THE WEAPON HIMSELF. THERE WERE NO SURVIVORS AT THE NAVAL BASE BY THE TIME IT WAS FINISHED. YOU SEE, THARLOT HAD SENT US A BIT TOO LATE—HE'D BEEN THERE FOR MONTHS ALREADY. HAD ME INJURED TO DRAW THE DOCTOR TO THE BASE, THEN LET HIS NATURE TAKE HOLD. THE ROBOTS ON HIS HOME PLANET HAD WARNED US HE WAS A KILLER. WE HADN'T RECKONED WITH THE FEROCITY HE'D SHOW.
"THARLOT KILLED ONE OF THE PANTHEON WITH THE WEAPON. I THINK WAIN AND HIS COHORTS HAD SERIOUSLY UNDERESTIMATED NOT JUST THARLOT'S INCREDIBLE UNTRUSTWORTHYNESS, BUT THE POWER OF THE GUN ITSELF. THEY THOUGHT THEMSELVES INVINCIBLE. ALMOST LIKE GODS.
"GOT THAT WRONG, I GOTTA SAY."
YOU HAVE SOMETHING I NEED DOCTOR.
AND I'LL GET IN ANY WAY I CAN!
VREEEEE
WHO'S NEXT, THEN? DOCTOR? MISS JONES? OR SHALL WE LEAVE IT TO POT LUCK?
FIRE!
BWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA
MARTHA!
YEAH?
DUCK!
VREEEEEEEEE

Y'SEE, THARLOT, THAT'S IMPRESSIVE HUMAN TECHNOLOGY, BUT THIS SONIC SCREWDRIVER? OH THAT'S MUCH BETTER TECH. AND NO MATTER WHAT YOU THROW AT IT, I CAN HOLD YOU BACK.
WHICH IS WHY YOU'RE AFTER IT, ISN'T IT?
COS IF YOU ADD MY SCREWDRIVER TO THE POWER OF THAT WEAPON, YOU COULD RULE THE UNIVERSE THROUGH FEAR, TERROR AND A RATHER LOUD NOISE, YES?
WELL, TOUGH LUCK, BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT HAVING IT. NOW OR EVER.

YOU WIN THIS ROUND, DOCTOR. MAYBE THIS BATTLE, BUT THE FINAL WAR IS MINE!
AND I SHALL HAVE YOUR SONIC WEAPON—REST ASSURED, EVEN IF I HAVE TO PRY IT FROM YOUR COLD, DEAD HANDS.
KLK
TILL NEXT TIME DOCTOOOOORRRRR

I HAD NO IDEA YOU COULD USE THE SONIC LIKE THAT.
NOR DID I. LUCKY IT WORKED.
THANK YOU DOCTOR—ON BEHALF OF THE PANTHEON...

EXPLANATION TIME, MR WAIN. WE'VE BEEN CHASED THROUGH TIME AND SPACE BY YOUR PANTHEON, SAND PEOPLE, CAT PEOPLE, ROBOT PEOPLE, PEOPLE-SHOOTING-MARTHA PEOPLE, AND I'M NOT HAPPY.
AND, IMAGINE THIS, IF I'M NOT HAPPY, JUST IMAGINE HOW UNHAPPY MARTHA IS!
OH, I'M NOT HAPPY AT ALL.

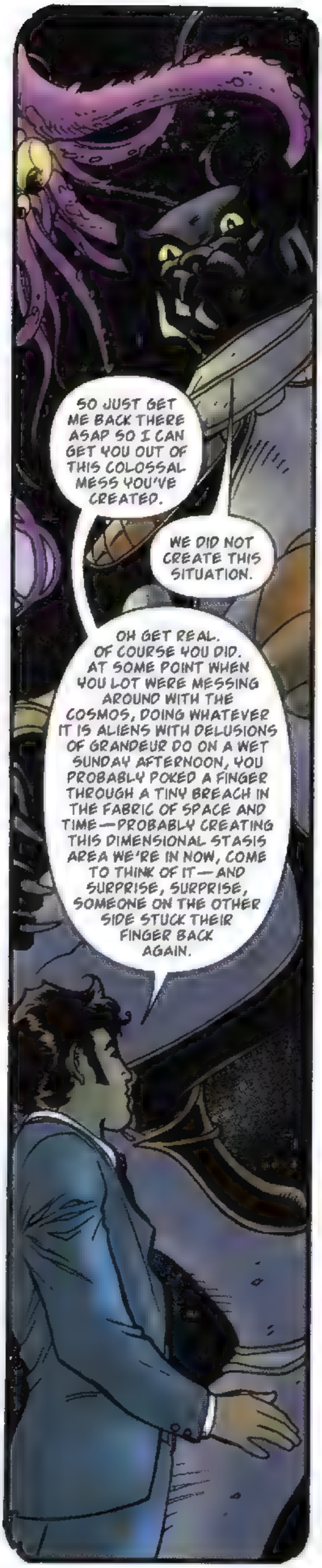
AND, BELIEVE ME, YOU DON'T WANT AN UNHAPPY MARTHA. IT'S NOT NICE. ESPECIALLY FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. AND EARLY AFTERNOON. AND, BETWEEN YOU AND ME, UNHAPPY MARTHA AT AROUND 9PM WHEN SHE'D RATHER BE WATCHING ER—NOT GOOD AT ALL.
YOU WATCH ER? STILL?
OKAY, SO IT'S NOT SO GREAT SINCE THEY DROPPED A HELICOPTER ON TOP OF DOCTOR ROMANO—
ANYWAY! BACK TO THE POINT...
PRIORITIES... DOES NO ONE UNDERSTAND PRIORITIES THESE DAYS...
ALWAYS HAD A THING FOR DOCTOR CORDAY, ACTUALLY...
OH SHE'S GREAT. AND A BRITISH ACTOR IN A US SHOW NOT PLAYING A VILLAIN. I MEAN, HOW GREAT IS THAT?
TIME OUT! I BELIEVE THAT'S THE PHRASE THEY USE ON AMERICAN TELEVISION. MAYBE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THAT?
SO, THIS PANTHEON OF YOURS. PROTECTING THE UNIVERSE AND ALL THAT, YES? BUT THEY GOT IT WRONG, EMPLOYED YOU TO FIND THEM SOMEONE LIKE THARLOT.
AND I GOT IT WRONG, YES.
OH I KNOW, AND THEN WHEN THEY GOT RID OF DOCTOR CARTER...
ANYONE INTERESTED IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KNOWN UNIVERSE, RIGHT NOW?
YOU BROUGHT ER UP, NOT ME...
SO, WHAT NOW? WE'VE LOST HIM, THE CANON, AND HAVE NO CLUE WHERE HE'S GONE, OR WHATEVER HE'S PLANNING TO DO NEXT.

QUELLE SURPRISE. IT'S LIKE A BAD PANTOMIME, I JUST HAVE TO SAY YOUR NAME AND ONE *THEY'RE BEHIND YOU* LATER, HERE YOU ARE.

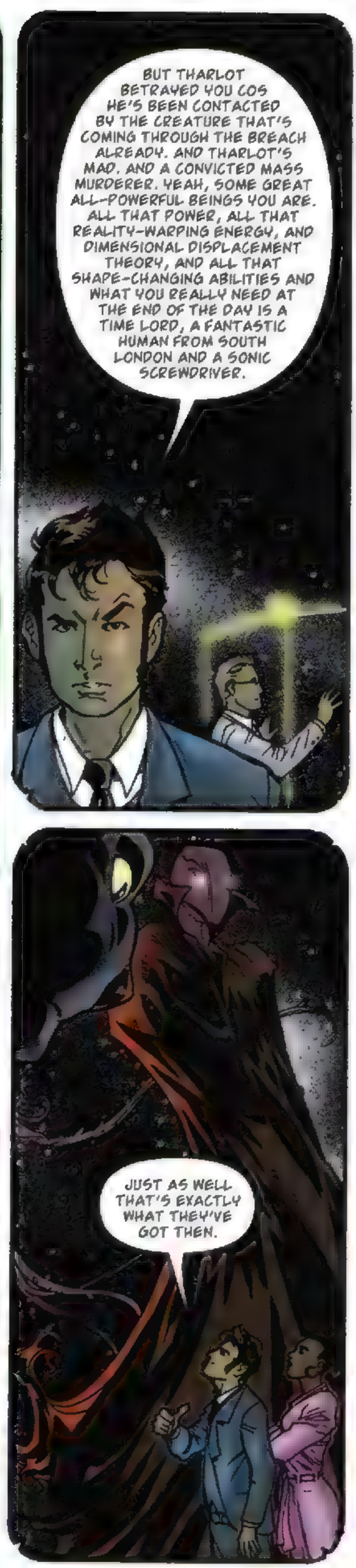
I'M SO NOT GOING TO GET USED TO THIS....

YOU REQUIRE YOUR TARDIS? IT IS ON OMPHALOS.

YUP. I KNOW. EVEN MISTER WAIN KNOWS THAT, AND I'M NOT SURE HE KNOWS A GREAT DEAL TO BE HONEST. LIKE HOW DAFT IT IS TO MAKE BUSINESS DEALS WITH ENTITIES THAT THINK OF THEMSELVES AS GODS.


SO JUST GET ME BACK THERE ASAP SO I CAN GET YOU OUT OF THIS COLOSSAL MESS YOU'VE CREATED.
WE DID NOT CREATE THIS SITUATION.
OH GET REAL. OF COURSE YOU DID. AT SOME POINT WHEN YOU LOT WERE MESSING AROUND WITH THE COSMOS, DOING WHATEVER IT IS ALIENS WITH DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR DO ON A WET SUNDAY AFTERNOON, YOU PROBABLY POKED A FINGER THROUGH A TINY BREACH IN THE FABRIC OF SPACE AND TIME—PROBABLY CREATING THIS DIMENSIONAL STASIS AREA WE'RE IN NOW, COME TO THINK OF IT—AND SURPRISE, SURPRISE, SOMEONE ON THE OTHER SIDE STUCK THEIR FINGER BACK AGAIN.

HOW DARE YOU! DO YOU NOT KNOW WHO YOU ARE CHASTISING? WE ARE THE PANTHEON, WE ARE THE—
OH DO BELT UP! THERE ARE BILLIONS OF PEOPLE OUT THERE, WHIPPED OFF THEIR HOME PLANETS, CONFUSED, SCARED, ANGRY (ESPECIALLY THE TAUREANS, THEY HAVE TEMPERS MILDLY SHORTER THAN MINE AT TIMES LIKE THIS) AND UNAWARE THEY'RE PART OF SOME UNIVERSAL WEAPON YOU'VE KNOCKED TOGETHER WITH THEIR PLANETARY ALIGNMENTS TO SEAL THAT BREACH.
AND NOW YOU'VE LET SOME DESPOT RUN OFF WITH THE ONLY VERY REAL WEAPON WE COULD USE TO CLOSE IT. COS YEAH, ALL THAT PSYCHIC ENERGY YOU WERE RELYING ON, THAT MIGHT STOP THE CREATURE, BUT IT WON'T BE ENOUGH TO SEAL THE BREACH. FOR THAT, YOU NEED TO REWRITE THE MOLECULES OF THE GASH ITSELF. AND SONICS ARE DEAD GOOD FOR THAT. AND, AS THARLOT KNEW, CHUCK MY SONIC SCREWDRIVER—MY LOVELY FULL OF GALLIFREYAN TIME LORD TECHNOLOGY SCREWDRIVER—INTO THE MIX AND BINGO, YOU HAVE WHAT YOU NEED.


BUT THARLOT BETRAYED YOU COS HE'S BEEN CONTACTED BY THE CREATURE THAT'S COMING THROUGH THE BREACH ALREADY. AND THARLOT'S MAD, AND A CONVICTED MASS MURDERER. YEAH, SOME GREAT ALL-POWERFUL BEINGS YOU ARE. ALL THAT POWER, ALL THAT REALITY-WARPING ENERGY, AND DIMENSIONAL DISPLACEMENT THEORY, AND ALL THAT SHAPE-CHANGING ABILITIES AND WHAT YOU REALLY NEED AT THE END OF THE DAY IS A TIME LORD, A FANTASTIC HUMAN FROM SOUTH LONDON AND A SONIC SCREWDRIVER.
JUST AS WELL THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THEY'VE GOT THEN.

LISTEN TO ME MARTHA. THIS IS BIG. AND DANGEROUS. THE PANTHEON HAVE EFFECTIVELY BULLIED, CHEATED AND MANIPULATED US INTO DOING THIS. BLACKMAILED ALMOST. AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO, I CAN'T WALK AWAY, CAN'T GIVE THIS ONE A MISS, BECAUSE THERE ARE TOO MANY LIVES AT STAKE HERE.

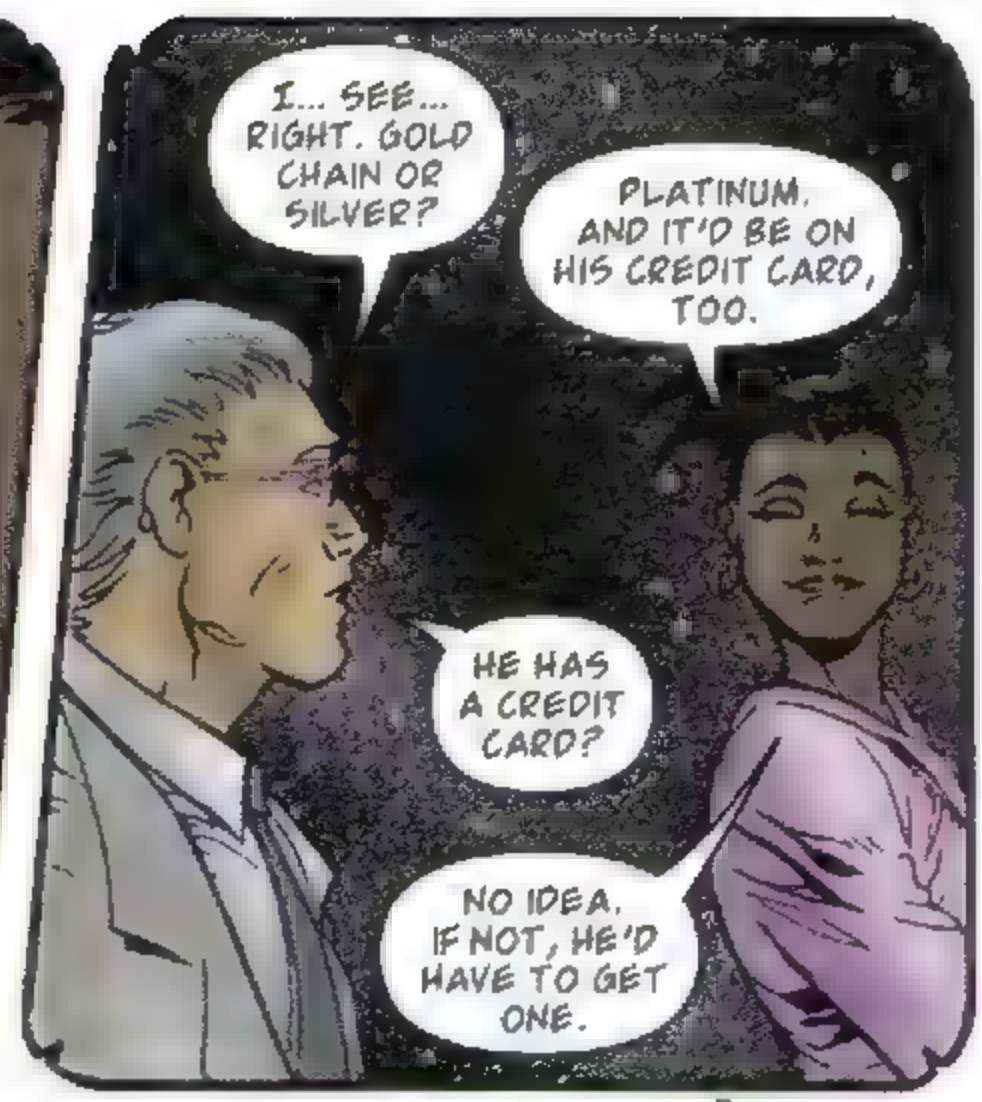
AND THE EXISTENCE OF THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.

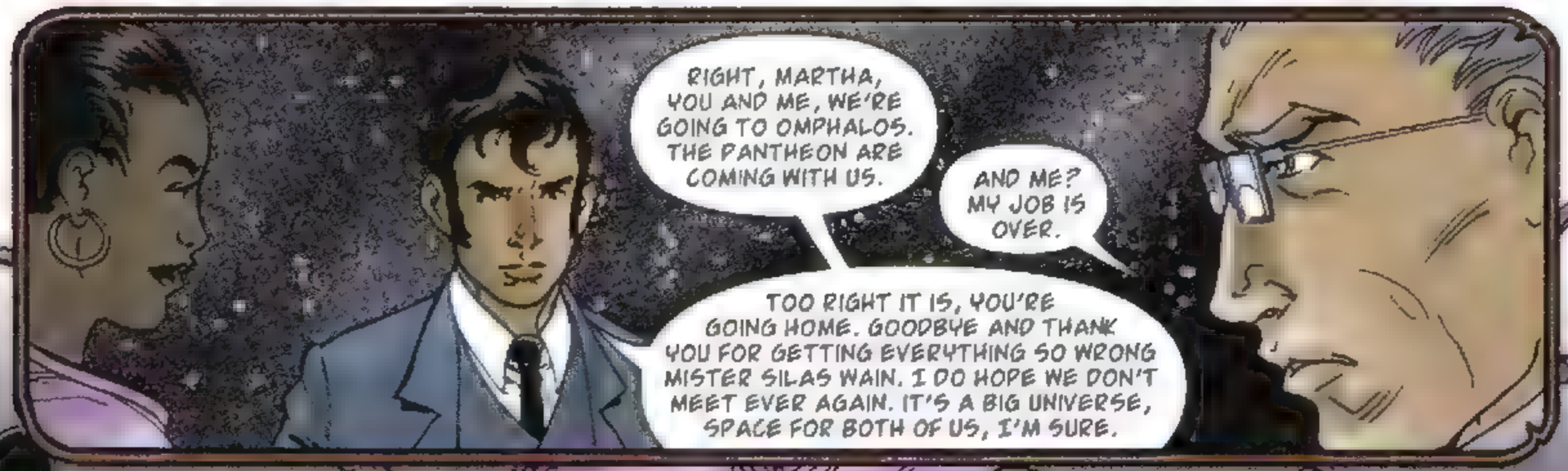
WELL, YES THERE IS THAT. BUT SERIOUSLY, WE GET BACK TO THE TARDIS AND HEAD AFTER THARLOT. FINE. AFTER THAT, I CAN OFFER NO GUARANTEE FOR YOUR SAFETY. OR MINE. OR ANYONE'S. AND I MADE A PROMISE TO YOUR MUM—AND HEAVEN HELP ME, YOUR MUM HAS A LEFT HOOK GEORGE FOREMAN WOULD'VE BEEN PROUD OF—A PROMISE TO KEEP YOU SAFE. AND I CAN'T KEEP THAT PROMISE IF YOU COME WITH ME.

SO, IF YOU STAY IN THE TARDIS TILL IT'S ALL OVER, I'D BE HAPPIER. YOU'D BE SAFER. AND YOUR MUM WILL STILL HAVE A MARVELLOUS, MAGNIFICENT MARTHA.

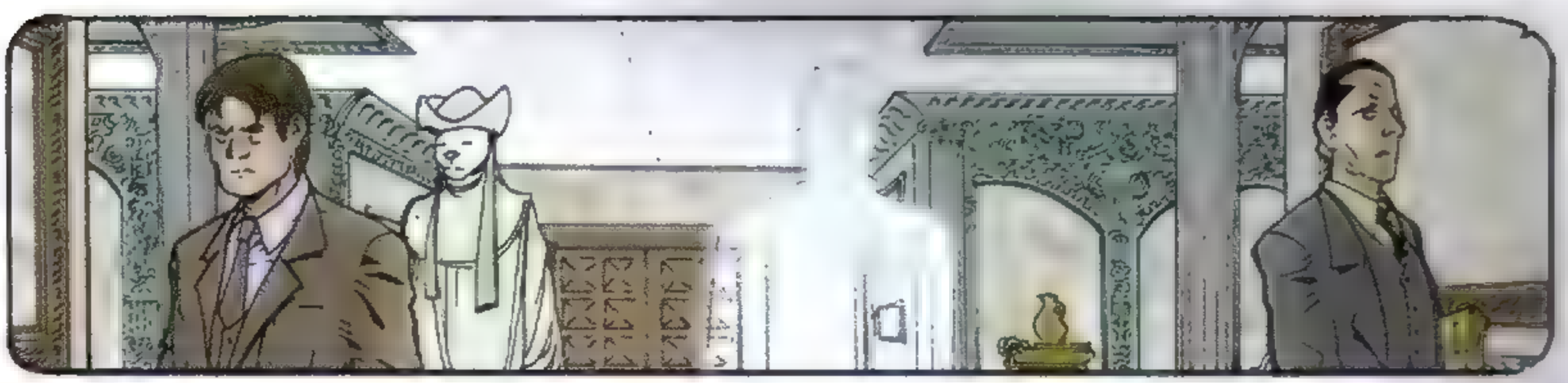
TELL ME SOMETHING DOCTOR. DO YOU THINK I CAN BE OF ANY HELP ON THE BATTLEFIELD? DO YOU THINK THAT EVEN ONE PERSON COULD BENEFIT FROM MY PRESENCE? BECAUSE IF YOU SAY YES, I'M WITH YOU ONE HUNDRED PERCENT. IT'S WHAT I SIGNED ON FOR. IT'S WHAT I DO. THE DOCTOR AND MARTHA JONES. TEAM SUPREME. I JUST NEED YOU TO SAY YES.

WHAT IF HE'D SAID "NO?"
THEN I'D BE WEARING SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM ON A CHAIN AROUND MY NECK.
OH. WHAT EXACTLY?

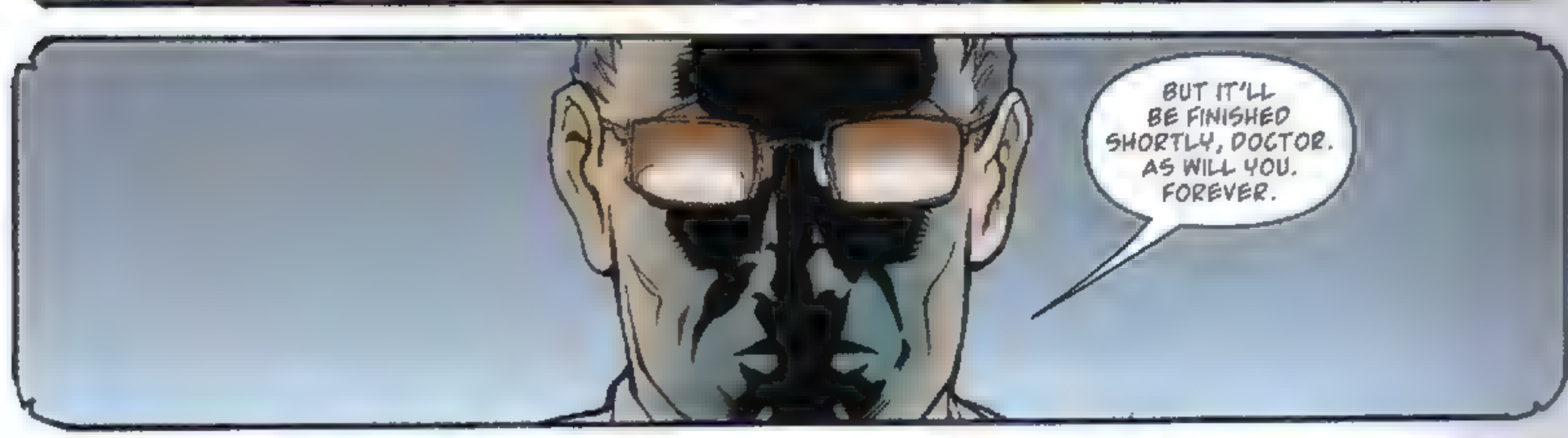

I... SEE... RIGHT. GOLD CHAIN OR SILVER?
PLATINUM, AND IT'D BE ON HIS CREDIT CARD, TOO.
HE HAS A CREDIT CARD?
NO IDEA. IF NOT, HE'D HAVE TO GET ONE.


RIGHT, MARTHA, YOU AND ME, WE'RE GOING TO OMPHALOS. THE PANTHEON ARE COMING WITH US.
AND ME? MY JOB IS OVER.
TOO RIGHT IT IS, YOU'RE GOING HOME. GOODBYE AND THANK YOU FOR GETTING EVERYTHING SO WRONG MISTER SILAS WAIN. I DO HOPE WE DON'T MEET EVER AGAIN. IT'S A BIG UNIVERSE, SPACE FOR BOTH OF US, I'M SURE.

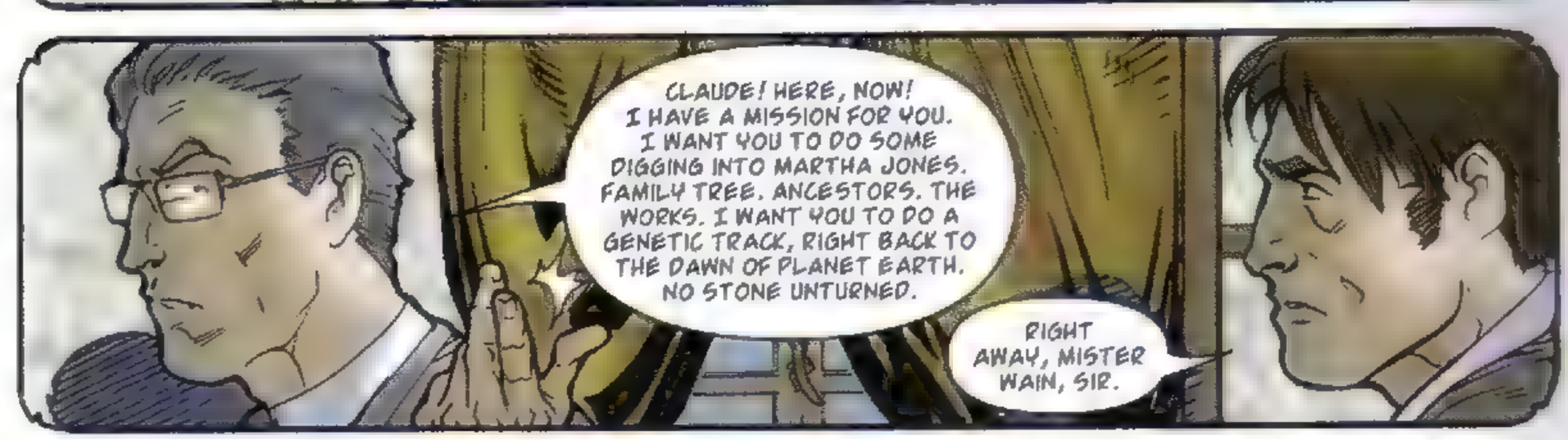
TIME TO GO BUBASTION. WE HAVE A UNIVERSE TO SAVE.

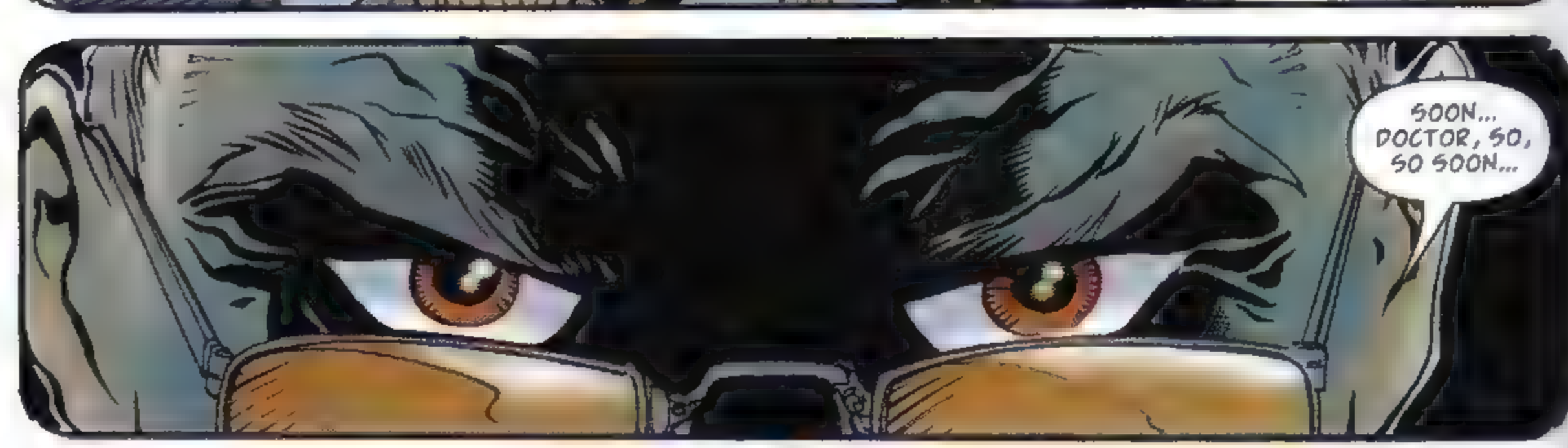


HOME AGAIN. WELL, THAT WAS A JOB WELL DONE. IF ONLY HALF DONE.


BUT IT'LL BE FINISHED SHORTLY, DOCTOR. AS WILL YOU. FOREVER.

AND IT WON'T BE A CASE OF "SPACE," DOCTOR, BUT "TIME." A VERY SPECIFIC TIME.


CLAUDE! HERE, NOW! I HAVE A MISSION FOR YOU. I WANT YOU TO DO SOME DIGGING INTO MARTHA JONES. FAMILY TREE. ANCESTORS. THE WORKS. I WANT YOU TO DO A GENETIC TRACK, RIGHT BACK TO THE DAWN OF PLANET EARTH. NO STONE UNTURNED.
RIGHT AWAY, MISTER WAIN, SIR.


SOON... DOCTOR, SO, SO SOON...

"AND SO, MUM, HERE I AM. THE PANTHEON BROUGHT US AND THE TARDIS HERE, AND USING THE SONIC STAIN ON THE DOCTOR'S SCREWDRIVER, WE TRACED THE CANNON TO HERE, TO THE RUINS OF WHAT WAS ONCE A LUSH GREEN PLANET.
"I HEARD SOMEONE SAY IT WAS CALLED KAS. ALL I KNOW IS THAT IT'S THE CLOSEST TO THE BREACH AND IN ABOUT TEN MINUTES, THE DOCTOR IS GOING TO USE THAT SONIC CANNON TO CHANNEL NOT JUST ITS OWN SONIC POWER, BUT ALL THE PSYCHIC ENERGY OF THE BILLIONS OF PEOPLE TRANSPORTED BY THE PANTHEON TO THE OTHER PLANETS IN THIS ALIGNMENT.
" THEY AREN'T FIGHTERS LIKE THESE PEOPLE—THESE PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED TO BE THE ADVANCE GUARD, TO GIVE THE OTHERS TIME TO PREPARE THEMSELVES MENTALLY A COUPLE OF THE PANTHEON ARE WITH THEM, HELPING SOOTHE THEM, MENTALLY.
"I DON'T LIKE THIS. I DON'T LIKE THE WAR. THE DEATH. THE THOUGHT THAT THESE PEOPLES' BRAINS MIGHT GET FRIED. BUT I'M STILL GLAD THE DOCTOR SAID 'YES'."

SONIC TOOLS ARE JUST THAT, THARLOT. TOOLS. NOT WEAPONS. SONIC SCREWDRIVERS, SONIC LIPSTICKS, SONIC PENS, SONIC FORKS EVEN—TOOLS. AND I ALWAYS SWEAR THAT I'LL NEVER USE MINE AS ANYTHING OTHER THAN THAT. BUT TODAY, THARLOT, TODAY YOU'RE TRYING MY PATIENCE AND THERE'S A LOT AT STAKE.

SO USE IT AS A WEAPON, DOCTOR. USE IT AS IT SHOULD BE USED, AS A TOOL OF DEATH, AND DESTRUCTION, AND DEVASTATION. YOU BARELY USE A FRACTION OF ITS POTENTIAL, IT'S POWER. BECAUSE YOU ARE WEAK AND ENFEEBLED.

VREEEEEEEEEE

THAT WAS YOUR LAST KILLING, THARLOT, I'M SORRY. I HAVE TRIED NOT TO DO THIS, BUT YOU LEAVE ME NO CHOICE. I'M SO SORRY.

"AND WHEN MY SONICS CONTERACT YOUR SONICS..."

THWEEEEEPPP

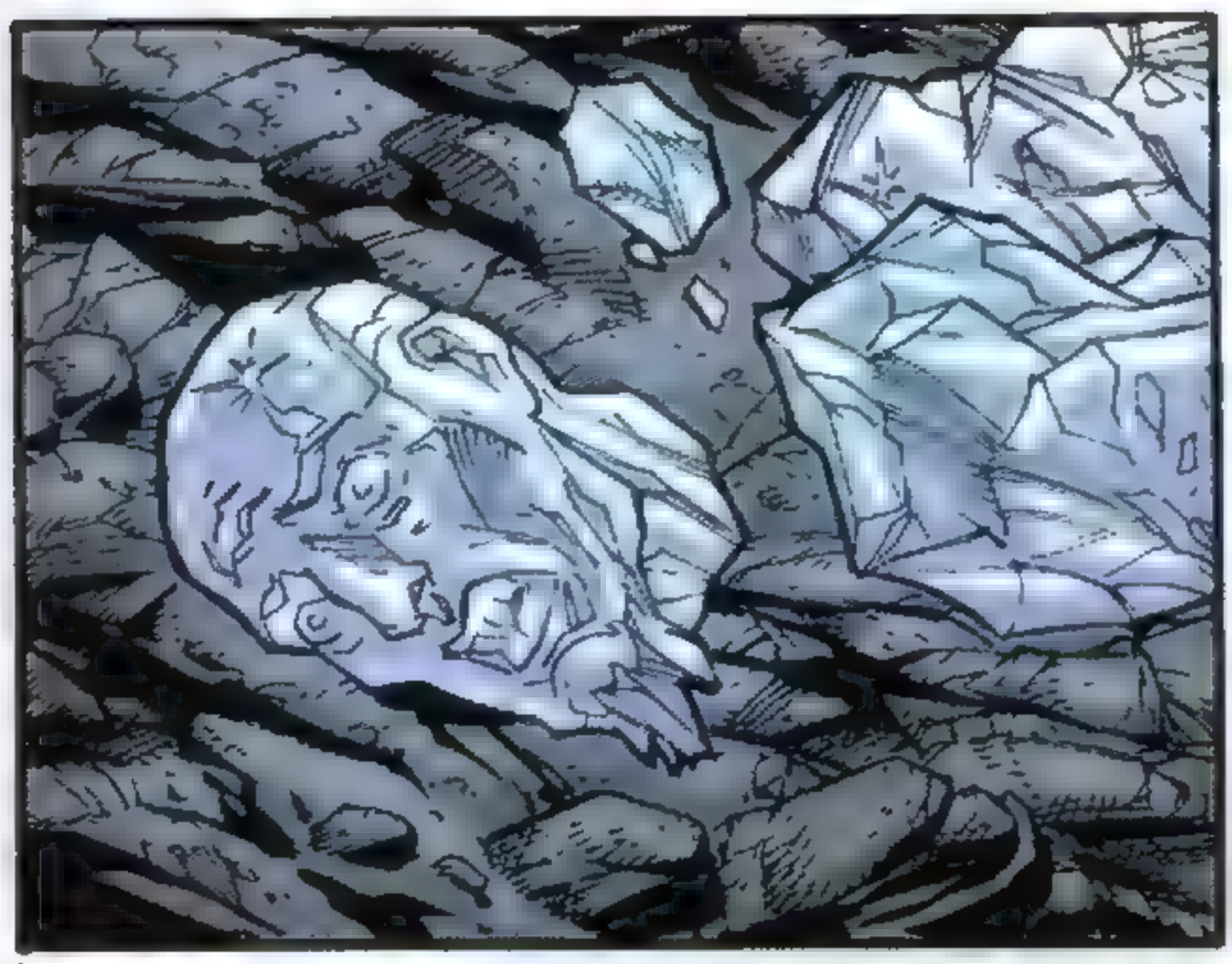
NO!

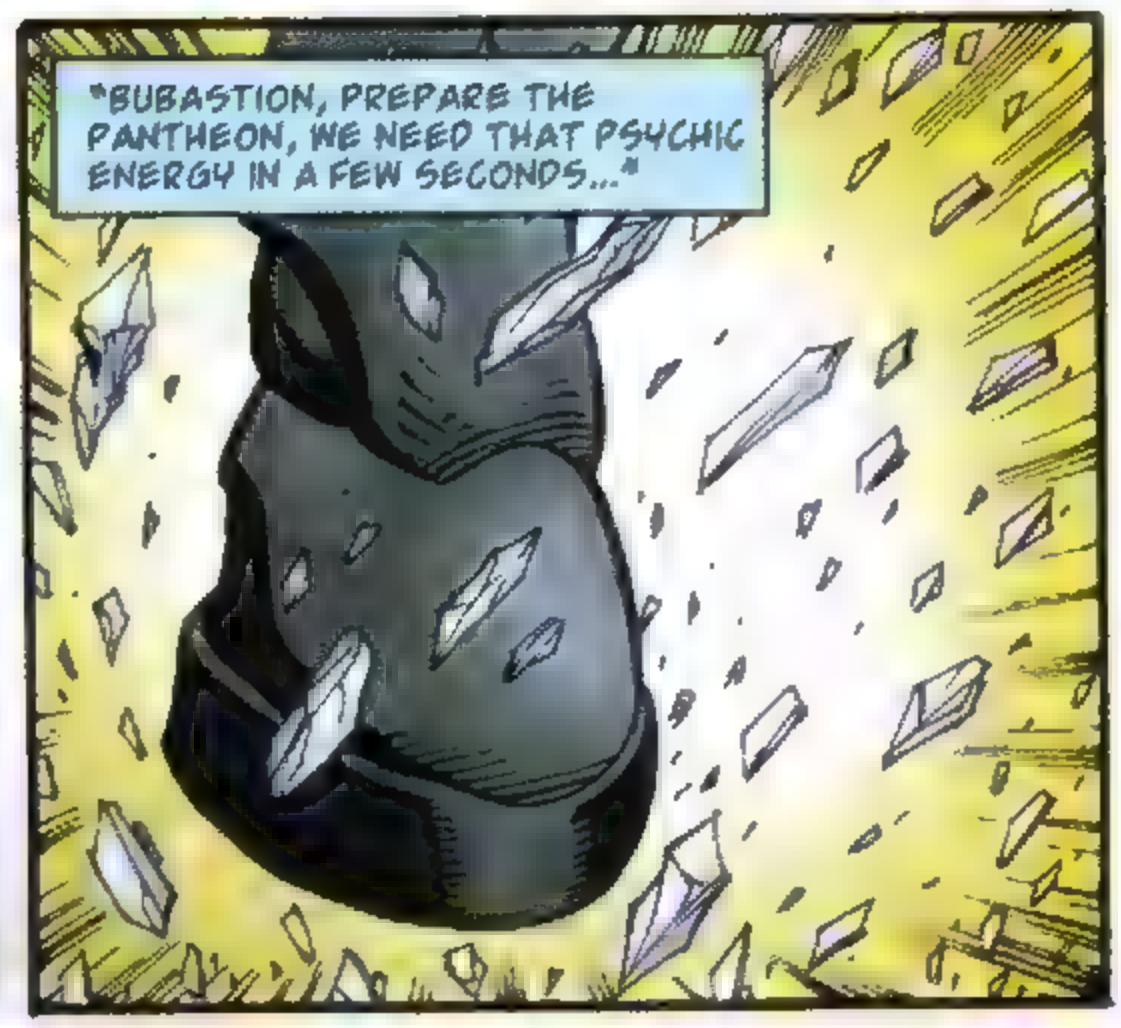
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

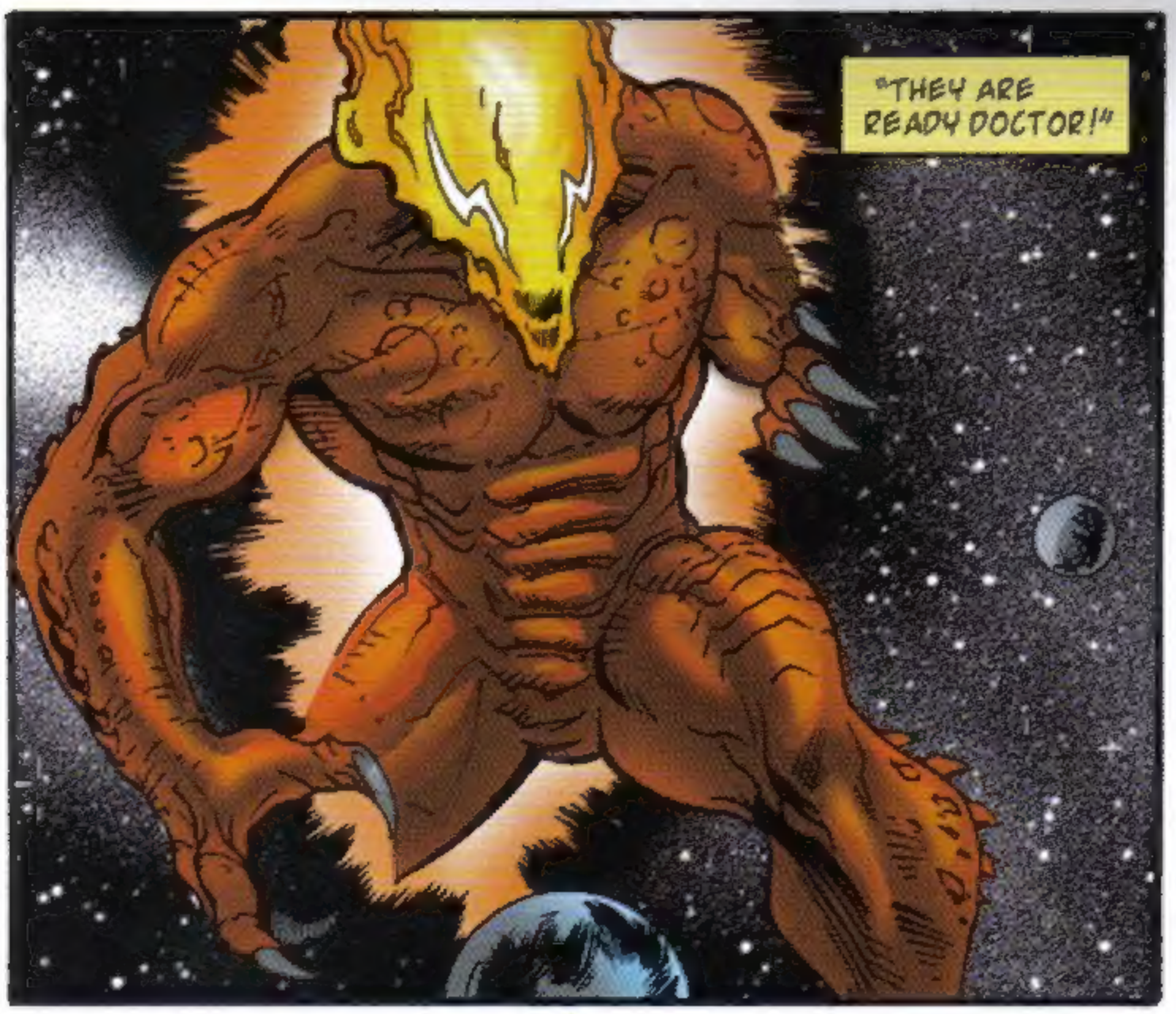
DOCTOR! NO... STOP THIS... HELP!

HELP... ME...

VICTORY IS OURS! WE HAVE THE CANNON!

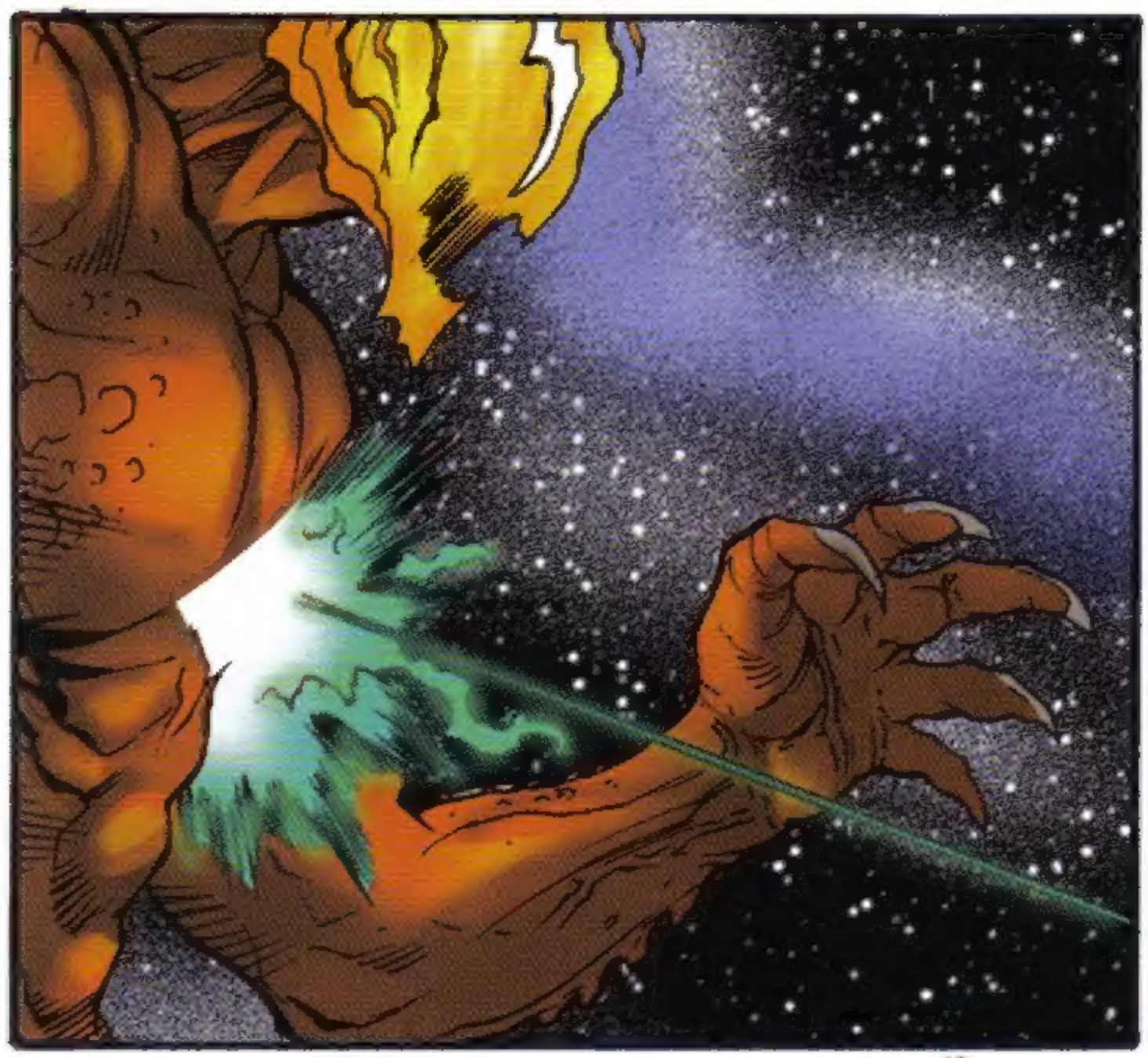





"THEY ARE READY DOCTOR!"

THIS BETTER WORK, BUBASTION, OR IT'S THE SHORTEST, MOST PYRRHIC VICTORY IN HISTORY...

OH YES!



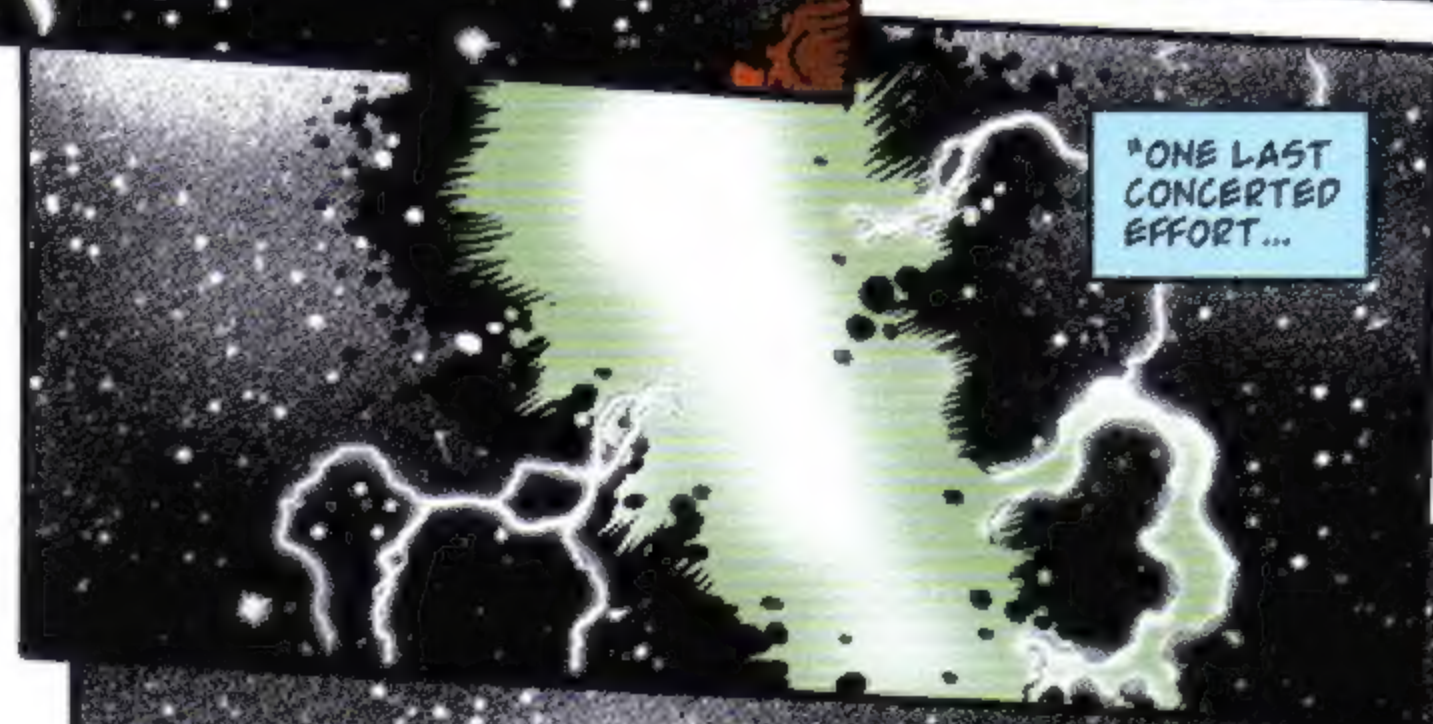
NOW, BUBASTION, WE NEED THE THOUGHTS OF A BILLION SOULS. NOW!
GOD, I HOPE THIS WORKS...

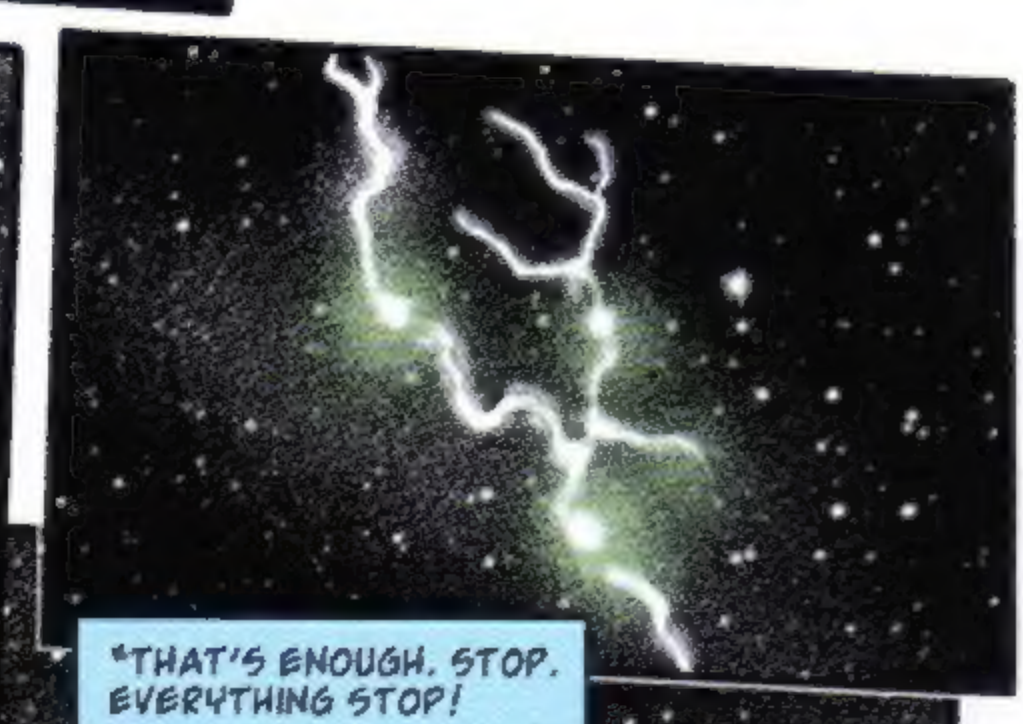
"DOCTOR! IT'S WORKING... OH MY GOD, IT'S WORKING..."

"DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS JUST YET, MARTHA...

"I DON'T BELIEVE IT—THE PANTHEON GOT IT RIGHT! THE PLAN WORKS!"

"DOCTOR, MY FELLOW PANTHEON REPORT THE POPULATIONS ARE WEAKENING, THEY HAVE NO ENERGY LEFT..."


"ONE LAST CONCERTED EFFORT...


"THAT'S ENOUGH. STOP. EVERYTHING STOP!

"IT'S OVER...

BUT AT WHAT A COST...
YOU SAVED THE UNIVERSE, DOCTOR. YOU AND YOUR SONIC SCREWDRIVER SAVED THE WHOLE UNIVERSE TODAY.
"THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SENT HOME, TO CELEBRATE VICTORY, TO MOURN THE DEAD, DYING OR MISSING...
"...WILL THEY EVER RECOVER FULLY FROM THIS?"
"DUNNO, MARTHA. OVER TIME. PERHAPS. A TERRIBLE PRICE HAS BEEN PAID BY RACES, PLANETS AND CIVILISATIONS WHO NEVER ASKED TO BE PAWNS IN THE GAMES OF BEINGS LIKE THE PANTHEON...
"...WHO I HAVE TOLD I NEVER WANT TO SEE, HEAR OR READ ABOUT EVER AGAIN."
THE END